



# United States Congress

NEWS RELEASE

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Craig (208) 342-7985      Crapo (202) 224-5150  
Simpson (208) 334-1953      Sali (208) 336-9831

## **ADDITIONAL FUNDING COMING TO ASSIST IDAHO POTATOES**

### **Nematode fight garners additional \$500,000 from USDA**

Washington, DC – Idaho’s potato crop will receive an additional boost in the ongoing fight against the potato cyst nematode, with the announcement that an additional \$500,000 has been approved to eradicate the pest. The Idaho Congressional Delegation says the Bush Administration has continued to be an essential partner in this ongoing effort to eradicate the potato cyst nematode (PCN) in Idaho.

“The potato cyst nematode originally appeared in a limited number of Eastern Idaho fields in dirt attached to some potatoes removed at harvest,” the Delegation said in a joint statement. “In April, more than \$10 million was approved to eradicate the pest and we’re very pleased that an additional \$500,000 has been added to that total amount.”

The potato cyst nematode is not harmful to humans and does not threaten consumption of the potatoes. Left unchecked, however, it can cause up to an eighty-percent crop loss. The Delegation members again thanked Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns, Office of Management and Budget Director Rob Portman and others in the Bush Administration for prioritizing efforts to protect Idaho’s potato crop.

The \$500,000 for PCN is in addition to emergency funding that has already been dedicated toward PCN surveillance and eradication activities in Idaho. Specifically, the funding will advance intensive survey activities in seed potato fields, packing facilities and storage sheds. State and federal agricultural officials will also continue soil fumigations and quarantine enforcement to eradicate PCN in Idaho.

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